

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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FM AMEMBASSY NASSAU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6236

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR PINT BF

SUBJ: GCOB RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF RELATIONS WITH CUBA

1. LEADER OF PRINCIPAL OPPOSITION PARTY (FNM) KENDAL ISAACS REQUESTED MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR. SUBJECT WHICH HE RAISED WAS RECENT ANNOUNCEMENT OF GCOB RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH CUBA. ISAACS WANTED TO KNOW WHAT US POSITION WAS WITH REGARD TO GCOB RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF RELATIONS WITH CUBA AND WHAT US POLICY WAS TOWARD ITS OWN POSSIBLE RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF RELATIONS.

2. AMBASSADOR STATED THAT US POLICY HAD BEEN DEFINED BY PRESIDENT FORD IN AUGUST, WHEN HE WAS QUERIED AS TO WHETHER US HAD PLANS FOR RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF RELATIONS WITH CUBA. ESSENCE OF PRESIDENT'S RESPONSE WAS THAT US WAS NOT CONTEMPLATING CHANGE IN EXISTING POLICY, FURTHER THAT IN THE ABSENCE OF A CHANGE IN CUBAN ATTITUDE TOWARD THE UNITED STATES AND US ALLIES IN WESTERN HEMISPHERE, NO SUCH CHANGE IN US POLICY WAS LIKELY. AT THE SAME TIME, PRESIDENT INDICATED THAT US WOULD CERTAINLY KEEP ITS OPTIONS OPEN IN THE EVENT OF CHANGE IN CUBAN POLICY AND UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD OPERATE IN CLOSE COORDINATION WITH ALLIES IN THE AREA, NOTING THAT WE CONTINUED TO OBSERVE OAS RESTRICTIONS IMPOSED AGAINST CUBA. REGARDING ISAACS' INQUIRY CONCERNING PROBABLE

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EFFECT ON US-BAHAMIAN RELATIONS OF GCOB RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF

RELATIONS WITH CUBA, AMBASSADOR SAID HE HAD NO REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THERE WOULD BE ANY ADVERSE EFFECT UPON THOSE RELATIONS. GCOB HAD KEPT USG INFORMED OF DIRECTION IN WHICH ITS POLICY WAS MOVING AND USG HAD NOT INTERPOSED OBJECTIONS.

3. AMBASSADOR ASKED ISAACS WHETHER HIS INQUIRY PRESAGED FNM ATTEMPT TO MAKE A MAJOR ISSUE OF GOVERNMENT'S ACTION. ISAACS RESPONDED THAT THAT WAS A MATTER FNM NOW HAD UNDER ACTIVE CONSIDERATION. IT WOULD HAVE TO TAKE A POSITION ON THE ISSUE. HE STATED THAT IF USG HAD ADOPTED A CLEARLY NEGATIVE ATTITUDE TOWARD BAHAMIAN RELATIONS WITH CUBA, HIS OWN INCLINATION WOULD HAVE BEEN TO RECOMMEND THAT FNM DENOUNCE RECENT GOVERNMENT ACTION. IN VIEW OF WHAT I HAD TOLD HIM, HOWEVER, HE DOUBTED THAT FNM WOULD WISH TO MAKE A MAJOR ISSUE OUT OF THE MATTER.

4. COMMENT: DISTINCT IMPRESSION LEFT BY ISAACS WAS THAT HE AND HIS COLLEAGUES WERE NOT PARTICULARLY HAPPY BY GOVERNMENT ACTION, ALTHOUGH THEY DID NOT SEE IT AS A BURNING ISSUE. AT THE SAME TIME, IF THE ISSUE COULD HAVE BEEN PORTRAYED AS ONE WHICH ENDANGERED TRADITIONAL GOOD RELATIONS BETWEEN USG AND GCOB, THEN IT WOULD HAVE HAD SUFFICIENT SEX APPEAL TO GIVE IT PROMINENCE IN FNM POLITICAL OPPOSITION TO THE GOVERNMENT. ACCORDINGLY, I WOULD EXPECT SOME RELATIVELY MINOR NEGATIVE COMMENTS BY FNM IN UPCOMING PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES BUT, UNLESS ISAACS' COLLEAGUES ARE MORE CONCERNED ABOUT THE SUBSTANCE OF THE ISSUE THAN HE APPEARED TO BE, I WOULD DOUBT THAT THE MATTER WILL RECEIVE MUCH PROMINENCE IN INTERNAL GCOB POLITICS.

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